



**TOWN OF DARIEN
HHR BUILDING COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2023
HELD VIRTUALLY
6:00 PM**

Participants

Sarah Neumann
Jameson Riley
Chris Price
David Martin
Tom Harris
Patrick Hayes

Monica McNally, First Selectman
Tom Harris, O&G/APC
Dave Cravanzola, O&G/APC
Lorell Purcell, O&G/APC
Natasha Torre, Royle Principal
Keri Snowden, Hindley Principal
Paula Bleakley, Holmes Principal
Dr. Alan Addley, Darien DPS
Kevin Munrett, DPS
Travis Schnell, KG&D
Erik Kaeyer, KG&D
Mollie Hersh, Darien Times
James Palen, Board of Finance

Minutes

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from meeting on July 19, 2023

Called to order at 6:03 pm

Motion to approve the minutes by Jameson Riley, and seconded by David Martin. All voted in favor.

2. Public Comment*

None

3. Chair's Report

Nothing additional to report

4. Report and Recommendation by O&G/APC with Respect to Project Scheduling and Impact on the Bid Process

Lorel Purcell began the discussion and shared a slide presentation on the suggested path forward after receiving the bids.

Why?

Public bidding process resulted in a much lower participation in the trades and higher bids than estimated. When schedule was moved, it is a busy time of year and resulted in lower bids received.

O&G/APC - 240 companies were invited to bid; 150 companies were reached out to in order to understand what happened and what can be done to improve participation.

Themes:

Companies are busy and overworked - resources needed to bid are exceeded currently

Issues in committing to the work, as well as the accelerated schedule

Extent of work and the ability for bidders to pick and choose the work to go after. Some chose to choose other bids to focus on (not HHR)

Analysis not finalized - where we had 3 or 4 bids, the variance was +/- 5% which was expected.

After reaching out to the companies, O&G/APC feels they will have more participation in the fall for a re-bid of these packages

Delay start of the project to allow rebid of some packages:

Rebidding should document the true value of the current market to Darien/State of CT

Rebidding will allow us to eliminate the accelerated schedule

Attract additional bidders

Mitigate procurement supply chain lead time risks

Provides time for additional funding

Incorporate cost savings suggestions

Why not?

Risk of potential escalation costs

Which to rebid:

Which trade packages to rebid or accept:

O&G/APC will develop recommendations to HHR based on:

Bidder's willingness to hold price based on new construction schedule

Bid relationship to budget

Number of bidders that bid the trade package

Potential number of total bidders if trade package is rebid

Revised timeline:

Validate bids to end of August

HHRBC to reject bid packages to be rebid in September

Prepare rebid documents in September

Rebid and Scope reviews in October and November

Town to approve additional funding in October in November

Prepare Guaranteed maximum price amendment in December

HHRBC reviews in Dec/Jan

Issue contracts and procurement in Jan through the spring

Start construction in the spring and summer

Questions -

Does GMP come after town funding? Yes. If additional funding needed, appropriation needs to be approved by the town before awarding contracts. We will need to be clear with the numbers before going to Town of Darien for re-approvals.

State of CT OSCG&R is involved in this process and are aware of this process. We are waiting for feedback from the State.

Bidders told O&G/APC they would rather bid in October than January.

If the HHR committee agrees to the new schedule, the new start date will be analyzed.

Bid reject date will be confirmed.

Approximate new end date will be a year delayed. New end date will be August 2026, with delayed schedule.

Some silver linings to optimize supply chain, etc. What level of confidence do we have to not have this happen again?

We could partially accept some bids, but opening up some risks. This new rebid approach will give the committee a better story to understand the costs.

O&G/APC had verbal commitments from some companies. If we re-bid, we should have a minimum of 3 bidders for each package.

State mentioned HVAC work to avoid - what is the timeline to avoid? We are competing with that and October will be before the next round in February.

Were all trades on the accelerated schedule?

Yes - until the buildings were closed (no paint, flooring, etc.) gaining back time through 6-day work weeks. By rebidding with the 5 day schedule, a bidder with an expected estimate will be asked to honor their original price with the revised schedule.

Has this been successful in the past?

Yes. Has been done formally in the past with a letter.

If we rebid all packages, will we have greater participation and receive lower bids?

No, ones where a good turnout of bidders and a scope of work that is remaining and an estimate close to budget will be recommended to keep. Bidders will be asked if they will honor their numbers with a new schedule. If they say no, they will not hold the numbers, it will need to be rebid.

As we split the bids previously, are we going to rebid all three schools at the same time and ask all to bid on all?

All three will be bid - can bid on all or any singularly. We don't want to exclude some that can only bid on one school.

What percentage of the 150 companies contacted were able to give feedback? Approximately 60%.

Escalation risk of the rebidding?

If we pushed it out a year, a 3% escalation cost in labor would drive a higher cost. We will ask if they can absorb the cost. Rises every year.

O&G/APC will be managing the bids and reaching out to bidders and have another meeting in 3 weeks, to understand where we are with current bidders with a revised schedule.

August 16th as an interim report from O&G/APC, and September 6th to make a decision to accept certain bids and which ones will move forward.

Is it possible for a bidder to now bid all three schools? Yes.

We are going to ask them to change their bids from an accelerated schedule to a year later on a regular schedule. If they bid on a 6-day schedule and the number was x, and it's a year later with a 5-day schedule, would we see lower bids?

No - the overtime is only a portion of the jobs, and escalation is going to happen.

Maybe we add to criteria to look at overtime to the criteria to be reviewed. 22 working days would have been the accelerated schedule, not 22 weeks.

We will need data to back this up.

On August 16th, will they have more info from the State on cost sharing? Yes, we should have met with them at that point.

Incorporating cost savings? Will it affect end product quality?

Reduce the plastic laminate colors from 12 to 6 to reduce costs. Does not jeopardize quality of product. Decorative pavement could be reduced, as it is a premium. Underground sanitarium storm storage, could change material to reduce costs. Specs should be open to keep flexibility. The temperature controls are sole-sourced, and will be approached to look at different sub vendors. Could result in a 5% savings, which could be significant.

Impact on the schools?

DPS will be doing some pivoting - they began the summer getting ready for the project. This new school year will be opening as normal. Playground has been moved already. Moving the date out by a year makes the most sense. Waiting the year makes sense to not disrupt the school year. Aware of how the community and how they respond to the delay, and we will need to manage the communications and the Why. Custodial staff pivoted quickly and we can open as usual. Communications have been around flexibility and allowing us a year to then open under normal circumstances for planning will be best.

Jameson to be working with DPS to communicate decisions to staff, and will create a more formal line of communication.

We are going to discuss delay and how we proceed. Do we need to vote beforehand? A press release will be sent to Dr. Addley to be sent to the school community. Direct lines of communication will be taken advantage of.

We agree that we are going to delay and adopt an adjusted schedule, and to review which bids to accept or rebid on August 16th.

Update on schools?

Less green space is available to be used at Hindley and Royle.

Hindley - Playground has been moved and a new portable is in place in anticipation.

Holmes- no changes, based on bids received.

Royle - O&G/APC will have construction trailer moved from Ox Ridge to Royle.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on the O&G/APC Report and Recommendation

Jameson Riley- on board with next steps. Appreciative of legwork of Dave and Lorell to understand where we are. Understand where we are with the current bids and delay allows for a better schedule and a quality product.

Dave Martin - on board with the proposed revised plan. We will have a small window and we need to not have only one bid on some pack

Sarah Neumann- agree and look forward to hearing more from O&G/APC

Tom Harris - When can we look at the comparison bid spreadsheet? Can be filled in soon - will work to fill in before 8/16. If sent ahead of time by the Friday before would be helpful (August 10)

Patrick Hayes- in agreement

Jill McCammon - in agreement. A quality project is critical - value engineering and project scope reduction is not what we want. We continue to feel the legwork to get the bids in October is critical. Thank you to the school staff for their flexibility, with thanks to Kevin and their team.

Chris Price - in agreement, and echo what others have said.

Monica McNally - I appreciate the building committee and their time. I am convinced the delay will give us a quality project.

6. Upcoming important dates

August 16th for our next HHRBC meeting, then September 9th to take formal action. Press Release to go out July 27th. New dates will be needed to go out to the different town bodies for approval. Dr. Addley - will be sending out a message to staff and parents with revised dates.

OSCG&R needs to be looped in. We may need to have approvals in place for December 15th for the state, and back in for approvals for that.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Patrick Hayes, seconded by Jill McCammon. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:06.